

**ACT GOVERNMENT SUBMISSION**

**INQUIRY INTO THE COORDINATION OF THE SCIENCE TO COMBAT  
THE NATION'S SALINITY PROBLEM**

***1. Use of salinity science base and research data (including the development of new scientific, technical and engineering knowledge) in the management, coordination and implementation of salinity programs***

There is some evidence of dryland salinity occurring on rural lands in ACT, although it is not considered to be a major land management issue. However, the actual extent of salinity is not known. Accurate data are not available to allow an assessment of existing salinity or the potential for it to become a serious land management issue in the ACT.

The establishment of baseline research for salinity has been identified as a need by the ACT Commissioner for the Environment. Environment ACT, the ACT Government's environmental agency and primary land manager, is preparing a project proposal to conduct a basic salinity study. This study will include salinity mapping and provide a basis for programs on rural and urban land. Australian Government funding assistance will be sought.

***2. Linkages between those conducting research and those implementing salinity solutions, including the coordination and dissemination of research and data across jurisdictions and agencies, and to all relevant decision makers (including catchment management bodies and land holders);***

The ACT believes that an essential element to successfully managing salinity is combining knowledge gained through research with practical solutions that can be implemented on the ground.

To ensure that the research leads to a successful mitigation program, the salinity project proposed for the ACT will include, in addition to research, an education component where land managers will be informed about the results of research, and trained to identify salinity and conduct appropriate on-ground work if required. The program may also involve providing land managers with incentives to establish appropriate land management practices to prevent salinity where there is a risk that it may occur.

***3. Adequacy of Technical and scientific support in applying salinity management options.***

Expertise in dryland salinity within the ACT Government is limited. Technical expertise will need to be 'bought in' to conduct research and to establish skills within government and the community so that salinity can be readily identified and appropriate action taken.